

Department of
Veterans Affairs

The Secretary's
**Robert W. Carey
Performance
Excellence Awards**



2006 Application

**THE SECRETARY'S ROBERT W. CAREY PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE
AWARDS PROGRAM**
2006 Information and Application

FOREWORD

The 2006 application package for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs' Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Awards includes application form, timeline, instructions, evaluation process, recognition, and winners' responsibilities. This is the Secretary's highest award for performance excellence.



The Management Systems Improvement Service must receive applications for the Secretary's Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Awards no later than May 5, 2006. The Awards will be presented in the fall of 2006.

For information concerning the 2006 application guidelines, contact the Management Systems Improvement Service (008B3).

Management Systems Improvement Service (MSIS) (008B3)
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Preparedness
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420
(202) 273-5077

**SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS *ROBERT W. CAREY* PERFORMANCE
EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS**

2005 TROPHY WINNER	
Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center Houston, Texas	
CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE WINNER	
White River Junction VA Medical Center White River Junction, Vermont	
CATEGORY WINNERS	ACHIEVEMENT WINNERS
Durham VA Medical Center Durham, North Carolina	Memorial Service Network I Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Miami VA Medical Center Miami, Florida	Minneapolis VA Medical Center Minneapolis, Minnesota

2004 TROPHY WINNERS	
Cooperative Studies Program Clinical Research Pharmacy, Coordinating Center Albuquerque, New Mexico	White River Junction VA Medical Center White River Junction, Vermont
CATEGORY WINNER	ACHIEVEMENT WINNERS
Amarillo VA Medical Center Amarillo, Texas	DeBakey VA Medical Center Houston, Texas
	Durham VA Medical Center Durham, North Carolina
	Riverside National Cemetery Riverside, California

2003 TROPHY WINNER	
Loma Linda Healthcare System Loma Linda, California	
CATEGORY WINNERS	ACHIEVEMENT WINNERS
Cooperative Studies Program Clinical Research Pharmacy, Coordinating Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico	White River Junction VA Medical & Regional Office Center, White River Junction, Vermont
Ft. Custer National Cemetery Augusta, Michigan	Durham VA Medical Center Durham, North Carolina
Riverside National Cemetery Riverside, California	

2002 TROPHY WINNER VBA Insurance Center Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	
CATEGORY WINNERS	ACHIEVEMENT WINNERS
Cooperative Studies Program Clinical Research Pharmacy, Coordinating Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico	Loma Linda Healthcare System Loma Linda, California
Spark M. Matsunaga VA Medical & Regional Office Center, Honolulu, HI	Northern Arizona VA Health Care System Prescott, Arizona
Ft. Custer National Cemetery Augusta, Michigan	Riverside National Cemetery Riverside, California
	White River Junction VA Medical & Regional Office Center, White River Junction, Vermont

2001 TROPHY WINNER VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York (Network 2) Albany, New York	
CATEGORY WINNERS	ACHIEVEMENT WINNERS
Cooperative Studies Program Clinical Research Pharmacy, Coordinating Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico	Fort Custer National Cemetery Augusta, Michigan
VBA Insurance Center Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	

PREVIOUS TROPHY WINNERS	
2000	Erie Veterans Affairs Medical Center Erie, Pennsylvania
1999	Grand Junction VA Medical Center Grand Junction, Colorado
1998	Staff Office Denver Distribution Center Lakewood, Colorado
1997	James A. Haley Veterans Hospital Tampa, Florida
1996	Calverton National Cemetery Calverton, New York
1995	Veterans Health Administration, VA Domiciliary White City, Oregon
1994	VA Regional Office Muskogee, Oklahoma
1993	Samuel S. Stratton VA Medical Center Albany, New York
1992	VBA Regional Office & Insurance Center Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

CONTENTS

Section	Page
I. Introduction.....	5
Purpose.....	5
Background.....	5
II. Carey Performance Excellence Awards Process.....	6
Process Chart	6
Process Description	7
III. Application Instructions.....	8
Eligibility	8
Timeline.....	8
Application General Guidelines.....	8
Application Requirements.....	9
Examiners and Judges.....	10
Examination Criteria	10
IV. Submission of Applications	11
Administration Facilities	11
Other Organizations and Independent Staff Offices	12
Final Submission of All Applications	12
V. Recognition and Winners' Responsibilities	13
Recognition	13
Winner's Responsibilities	14
Work Products.....	14
Costs.....	14
VI. Assistance	15
Past Winners	15
Administration Points-of-Contact for Carey Awards	15
Management Systems Improvement Service (008B3).....	15
Carey Program Web Site	15
Staff Assistance	15
VII. Nomination Form.....	16

I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The annual Secretary's Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Awards were established to recognize organizations with exemplary approaches to systems management. The Awards:

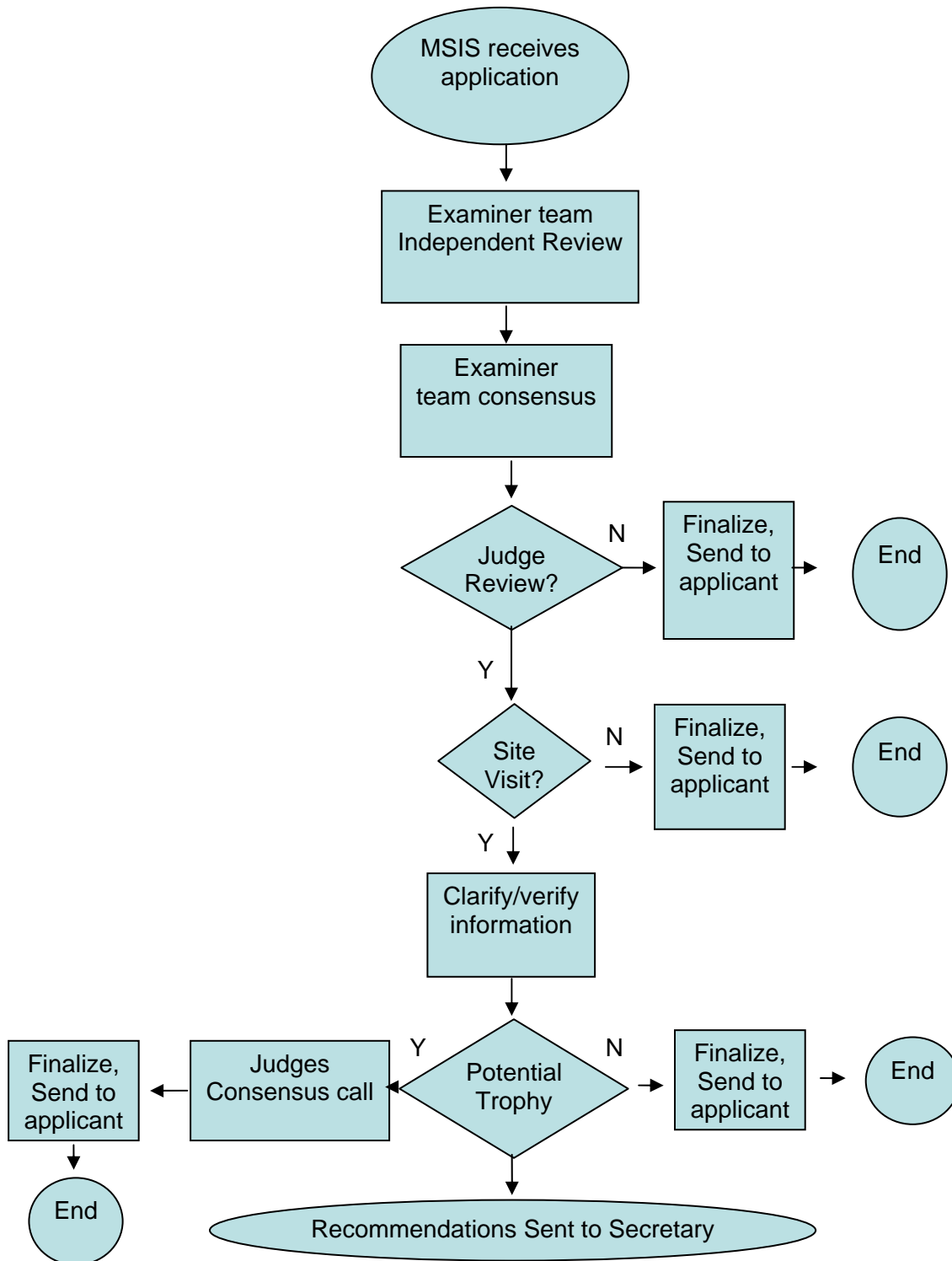
- Promote systems management awareness and implementation throughout VA.
- Provide a model against which organizations can measure performance compared to other public and private sector organizations.
- Inspire organizations and individuals to seek opportunities for continuous improvement.
- Support VA Strategic Goals:
 1. Restore the capability of veterans with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, and improve the quality of their lives and those of their families
 2. Ensure a smooth transition for veterans from active military service to civilian life
 3. Honor and serve veterans in life and memorialize them in death for their sacrifices on behalf of the Nation
 4. Contribute to the public health, emergency management, socioeconomic well-being, and history of the Nation
 5. Deliver world-class service to veterans and their families by applying sound business principles that result in effective management of people, communications, technology, and governance

Background

The **Secretary's Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Awards** use the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria as a foundation. The program has its own evaluation and selection processes designed to meet the specific needs of VA. The highest level Carey award is an elegant, engraved crystal trophy and is the most prestigious award for performance excellence in the Department of Veterans Affairs. Each fall, awards are presented by the Secretary in a ceremony attended by invited members of Congress, veterans service organizations, VA officials and employees, and other quality leaders.

The Award is named in memory of Robert W. Carey, a publicly recognized VA quality leader and a champion for excellence in the Federal Government. Mr. Carey was the Director of the Philadelphia Regional Office and Insurance Center from 1985 until 1990.

II. CAREY PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE AWARD PROCESS



Process Description

The Carey Program Office receives applications from organizational units within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Applications are reviewed by a team of trained Carey examiners. Applications receive an individual review and a team consensus review.

- Is the applicant organization selected for Judge's review? The Program Manager and Administration Co-chairs have the authority to select an application for review. Several events may trigger such a review: initial examination scores high enough to merit a site visit; an examination score significantly lower than the applicant received the previous year; or improper procedure or perceived bias exhibited by the examination team.
If NO, then the applicant receives a feedback report with score band information.
If YES, then the application, initial feedback report, and score are sent to a Carey Program Judge for review and comment.
- Is the applicant organization selected for a site visit? Program Manager and Administration Co-chairs recommend applicants for site visit based on score and judges feedback.
If NO, then applicant receives a feedback report with score band information.
If YES, then applicant is notified and arrangements are made for the site visit.

Site Visits are conducted for applicants that have the potential of being recognized by the Carey program. The purpose of the site visit is to clarify and verify information provided in the application.

- Based on site visit results the examination team may revise the feedback report and score to more accurately reflect actual applicant performance level.
- Is the applicant organization a potential trophy level winner?
If NO, then applicant receives a feedback report with score band information.
If YES, then the application, revised feedback, scores, and site visit information are sent to a group of Carey Program Judges for review and consensus. Judges focus on score validation and overall strength of applicant. Feedback reports and score band information are then finalized and sent back to the applicants.

After all site visits and reviews are complete, recommendations for Achievement, Excellence, Trophy, and Circle of Excellence awards are prepared and sent to the Secretary's office.

The Secretary selects award recipients.

III. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Eligibility

All VA organizations are eligible to compete for various awards. Winners of the **Trophy Award** will **only** be eligible to apply for the “Circle of Excellence Award” during the **five (5)** subsequent years after the year that they received the trophy.

Timeline	2006
Intent to apply*	February 23
Notification of participation**	March 23
Applications Due To Administrations	VHA, NCA, VBA (April 21)
Applications Due To MSIS 008B3	May 5
Application Review	June 5 – 9 (Week I) or June 12 – 16 (Week II)
Site Visits	July – August
Final Judging	September

* Intent to apply is a written indication by an organization that they have an interest in applying for the Carey award. Intent can be communicated through email to the Carey Program Manager or Administration award coordinator. This information is used in initial planning in determining criteria and examiner needs.

** Notification of participation is a commitment by potential applicants of participation. Administration coordinators and participating staff offices ***must*** notify Management Systems Improvement Service (008B3) of the number of expected applicants and examination criteria (business or health care) to be used no later than March 23, 2006.

Application General Guidelines

Applicants must complete: Nomination Form, located on page 16; Organizational Profile; and responses to selected 2006 Baldrige Performance Excellence criteria. The application should be written in non-technical language and should address the specific sub-elements described in the award criteria.

The applications must be written so examiners and judges, who may not be familiar with the applicant’s industry, can assess performance relative to the evaluation criteria. Narratives for each area addressed should be fully responsive and assume no prior knowledge of the organization. Responses should be concise and quantitative where possible. Facts and information should support statements. Assertions unsupported by plausible data, information, or facts will receive no credit during application evaluation.

III. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Care should be taken to fully define terminology specific to the business of the organization. If acronyms are used, define them and provide a glossary (glossary pages are NOT counted in the specified page limits).

- Each applicant organization should forward its application through its chain of command. Prior to submission, each nominating organization is to use its own internal screening process to select its nomination(s) that should be sent to the Management Systems Improvement Service (008B3). While there is no limit to the number of submissions, only those organizations that are considered deserving of this type of award should be endorsed and forwarded for examination.
- *Administrations are responsible to ensure nominations forwarded for evaluation do not have organizational or leadership issues that would disqualify an applicant from award recognition.*

Application Requirements

- Organizational Profile limited to **five (5)** pages (these pages are **NOT** counted in the overall page limit).
- The application is limited to **fifty (50)** pages to include all illustrative attachments (charts, graphs, quality vision statement, etc.). **Pages in excess of the 50-page limit will not be examined.** The glossary is not included in the 50-page limit.
- Applications must be printed or typed in **fixed pitch of 12 font or fewer per inch OR proportional spacing font of point size 10 or larger.** *A typical document produced in Times New Roman 10 point font will satisfy this requirement.*
- Charts, graphs, and tables must be no less than 8-point font. Particular care should be taken to ensure that all graphs, charts, and tables are large enough to read. Graphs, charts, and figures should be numbered and titled.
- **Each sub-element (e.g., 1.1a., 1.2b.) of the criteria should be separately labeled and addressed in the application.**
- Pages should be numbered.
- Use of columns for text is suggested to conserve space, given the application is limited to fifty pages.

III. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Examiners and Judges

Examiners and Judges are customers in the application review process. Application specifications represent feedback gathered directly from them. Applicants, the suppliers in the application review process, should strive to satisfy the customers' expectations of an application package that is easy to evaluate. Doing so will optimize the evaluation and selection processes as well as enable the Examiners to produce a thorough feedback package that accurately reflects the applicant's status in relation to the criteria.

Examination Criteria

The Secretary's award program uses current Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Criteria to evaluate applications. Applicants may use:

- **2006 Baldrige Business Performance Excellence Criteria; or**
- **2006 Baldrige Health Care Performance Excellence Criteria.**

IV. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Organizations should designate a coordinator who will be responsible for submitting applications. An original and **fourteen** (14) copies of the complete application package, including nomination form, should be prepared for submission. A disk copy (MicroSoft Word 7.0) of the application is required in addition to the hard-copy submission.

Applications for the **2006 Secretary's Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Awards** are due to the Management Systems Improvement Service (008B3) by May 5, 2006. Any applications received after that date may NOT be considered.

Administration Facilities

In order to permit time for internal organizational reviews, facilities must submit their applications to the following appropriate award coordinator no later than:

April 21, 2006 - Veterans Health Administration:

Office of Quality and Performance (10Q)
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420
Attention: Michael Greenblatt
Telephone: (202) 273-8331

April 21, 2006 - Veterans Benefits Administration:

Office of Field Operations
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420
Telephone: (202) 273-7259

April 21, 2006 - National Cemetery Administration:

Business Process Improvement Service (41B3)
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420
Telephone: (202) 273-5164

IV. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Other Organizations and Independent Staff Offices

All other organizations and independent Staff Offices should set their own review policies.

Final Submission of All Applications

Applications from administration organizations need to be received by administration award coordinators by April 21, 2006. Following administration internal review, approval, and endorsement, applications must be received by the Management Systems Improvement Service (008B3) Staff no later than May 5, 2006. Applications from other organizations and independent staff offices must be received by MSIS Staff no later than May 5, 2006. Applications received after May 5, 2006, may **not** be considered for the 2006 Award. The MSIS Staff may be reached at:

Management Systems Improvement Service (008B3)
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning, and Preparedness
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Telephone: (202) 273-5077

V. RECOGNITION AND WINNERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Recognition

Recognition is based primarily on performance. There are multiple levels of recognition.

- Certificates of Commitment will be given to organizations that demonstrate systematic approaches and are transitioning from problem solving to a general improvement orientation.
- Achievement awards will be presented to organizations that demonstrate effective, systematic approaches to management and have some positive trends and performance levels in key areas of importance.
- Excellence awards will be presented to organizations that demonstrate effective, systematic approaches to management, initiate refinements to continuously improve processes, and show positive trends and results in many key areas.
- Trophy awards will be presented to organizations that demonstrate systematic approaches to management, initiate refinements to continuously improve processes, and show good performance levels and trends in most areas of importance. A maximum of two Trophies will be awarded in any given year.
- Circle of Excellence (COE) awards will be presented to recent trophy level winners that are not yet eligible to compete for the trophy and have demonstrated performance levels equal to, or higher than, trophy level expectations. There is no limit to the number of COE awards each year. (Refer to the Circle of Excellence application book for additional information).

The trophy level **Secretary's Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Award** recipient(s) will receive a custom-designed, cut-crystal trophy. Circle of Excellence winners will receive an elegant encased award that identifies each year of recognition until that organization is eligible to compete for the trophy again. Excellence Award winners will receive an elegant encased award. Achievement Award winners will receive an engraved plaque. At the annual awards ceremony, held in fall, the Secretary will present these awards. VA will showcase the award winners throughout the year.

Applicants qualifying for a Certificate of Commitment will receive recognition with their feedback report.

V. RECOGNITION AND WINNER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Winners' Responsibilities

- Work Products

The **Secretary's Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Awards** were created to recognize high performance and to promote systems management awareness throughout VA. Accordingly, each award winner will be asked to (1) prepare a list of achievements so that quality initiatives and innovations can be shared with other facilities; (2) participate in National and Regional Conferences on performance excellence; (3) respond to inquiries from other facilities seeking to improve through the use of performance excellence criteria, and (4) host on-site visits for interested groups.

- Costs

Any costs incurred by the Board of Examiners, other than travel costs, will be the responsibility of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Central Office. The Administration, Staff Office, or other organization submitting an application will cover costs related to preparation of the application. Award winners will bear the costs of travel to the Award Ceremony as well as conferences.

VI. ASSISTANCE

Past Winners

Past winners can be an excellent source for assistance in: understanding time and resource requirements; interpreting criteria; and providing insights into gathering and displaying information efficiently. See list of past winners near the beginning of this booklet.

Administration Points-of-Contact for Carey Awards

Administration contacts have an understanding of the criteria, a working knowledge of administration business operations, and may be in a position to consult on application preparation.

Management Systems and Improvement Service (008B3)

- Carey Program Web Site

The Carey web site, <http://vaww.va.gov/opppb> contains desk guides, criteria, timelines, and other materials related to the Baldrige criteria and the Secretary's Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Awards Program.

- Staff Assistance

MSIS representatives have an understanding of the criteria and program requirements. Representatives may also be able to identify additional points of contact or materials to help your organization prepare an application or use feedback information.

Management Systems Improvement Service (008B3)
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20420

Eric J. Malloy at (202) 273-5585

VII. NOMINATION FORM

Applicant Organization

Name _____

Address _____

Highest Ranking Official in Applicant Organization

Signature _____

Name _____

Title _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

FAX _____

Size of Organization

Number of Employees _____

Number of Sites _____

Official Point of Contact in Applicant Organization

Name _____

Title _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

FAX _____